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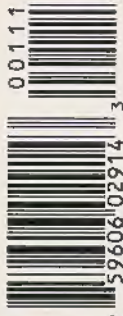
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# VENOM

**THE MADNESS** PART 1  
OF 3



DIRECT EDITION



*Kevin*  
*93*



STAN LEE  
PRESENTS

# TOXIC KISSES

VENOM: THE MADNESS

PART ONE

WHAT IS  
THIS NEW  
MADNESS?

THE  
REALM OF  
INSANITY HAS  
MANY PORTALS  
FROM WHICH  
TO SCAN THE  
UNIVERSE.

ONE OF  
THESE PORTALS  
IS THE DREAMS  
OF THE MAD.

EDDIE BROCK,  
YOU BELIEVE YOUR  
BONDING IS  
SYMBIOTIC.

THERE IS NO SUCH  
THING AS TRUE SYMBIOSIS.  
THERE IS ONLY USURY.  
ONE OF THE TWO  
ALWAYS HAS THE  
ADVANTAGE.

THAT  
CREATURE SLITHERS  
ALL OVER YOUR BODY,  
ENCASING YOU,  
CIRCUMSCRIBING  
YOU.

DO YOU NOT  
FEEL BY ITS GRIP  
WHICH ONE OF YOU  
IS IN CONTROL?

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IN YOU, VENOM, ARE  
EQUAL MEASURES OF  
DESPERATION SO TIGHTLY  
BOUND IT HAS CREATED  
A THIRD THING --

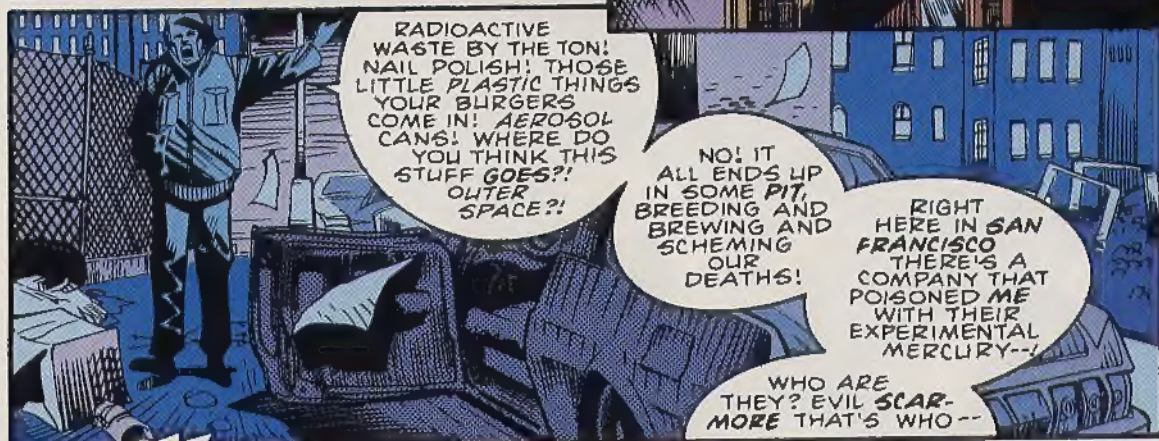
--A  
MADNESS.

NO  
MATTER. FOR  
TO WALK TOWARDS  
INSANITY IS TO  
WALK TOWARDS  
DUSK.



... IT'S  
INSIDIOUS!  
IT'S INFESTING  
EVERY  
THING!

... MIXING  
AND MERGING  
AND  
MUTATING ...

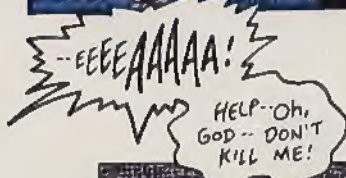


RADIOACTIVE  
WASTE BY THE TON!  
NAIL POLISH! THOSE  
LITTLE PLASTIC THINGS  
YOUR BURGERS  
COME IN! AEROSOL  
CANS! WHERE DO  
YOU THINK THIS  
STUFF GOES?!  
OUTER  
SPACE?!

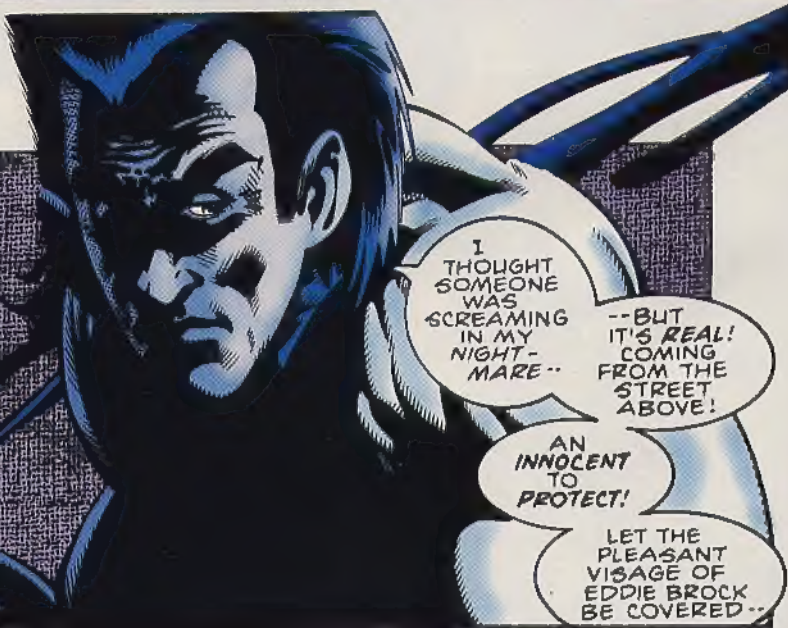
NO! IT  
ALL ENDS UP  
IN SOME PIT,  
BREEDING AND  
BREWING AND  
SCHEMING  
OUR  
DEATHS!

RIGHT  
HERE IN **SAN  
FRANCISCO**  
THERE'S A  
COMPANY THAT  
POISONED ME  
WITH THEIR  
EXPERIMENTAL  
MERCURY--!

WHO ARE  
THEY? EVIL **SCAR-  
MORE** THAT'S WHO--



HELP--OH,  
GOD-- DON'T  
KILL ME!



I  
THOUGHT  
SOMEONE  
WAS  
SCREAMING  
IN MY  
NIGHT-  
MARE--

--BUT  
IT'S REAL!  
COMING  
FROM THE  
STREET  
ABOVE!

AN  
INNOCENT  
TO  
PROTECT!

LET THE  
PLEASANT  
VISAGE OF  
EDDIE BROCK  
BE COVERED--



AAAAAA

--AND  
LET  
**VENOM**  
PROWL THE  
NIGHT!

I  
MUST  
FOLLOW  
THE  
SCREAMS!

WE  
MUST EARN  
OUR KEEP IF WE'RE  
TO BE ALLOWED  
TO STAY IN  
THIS HIDDEN  
UNDERGROUND  
CITY.

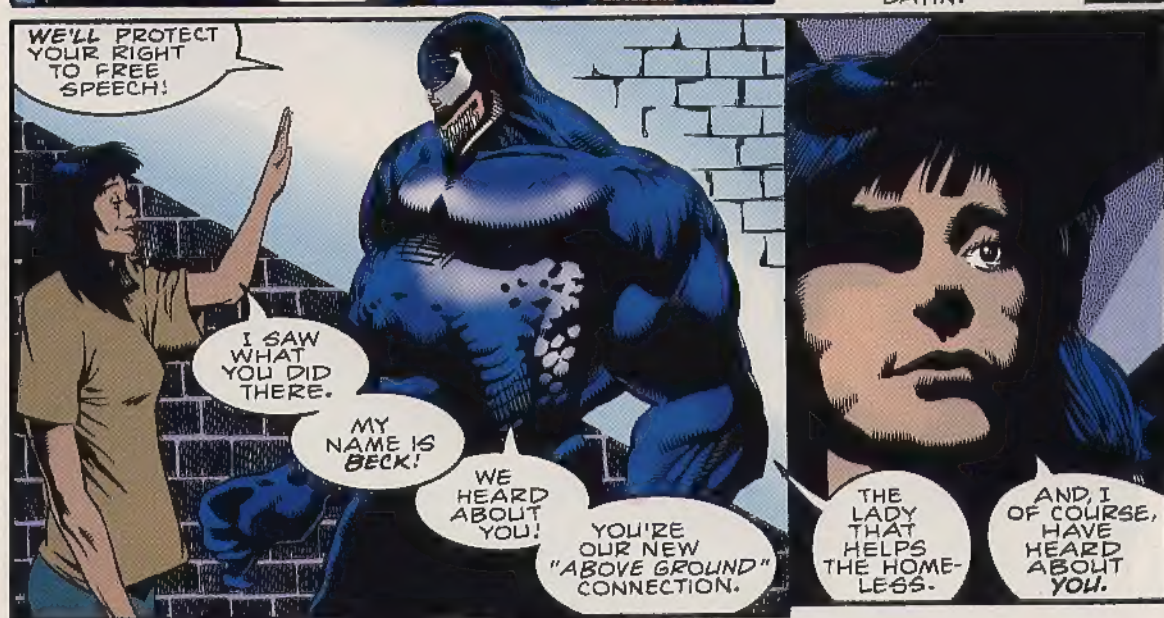
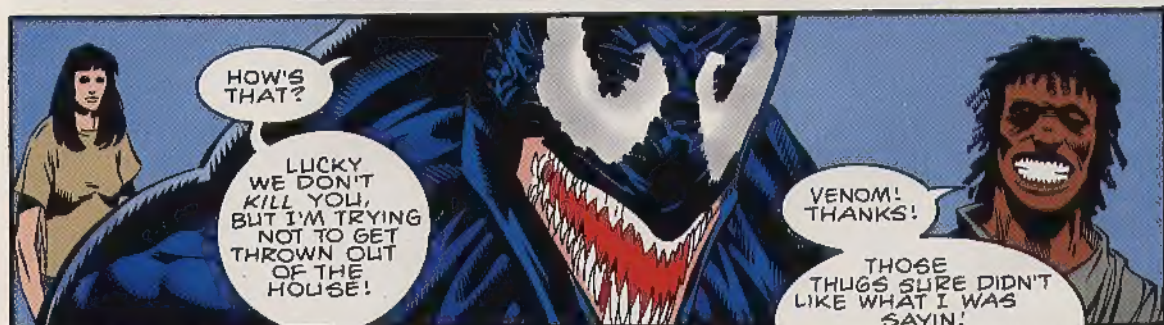
OUR  
ONE  
REFUGE  
AND  
SAFE  
HAVEN!

THERE!  
UP HERE  
IN THE  
LIGHT--!

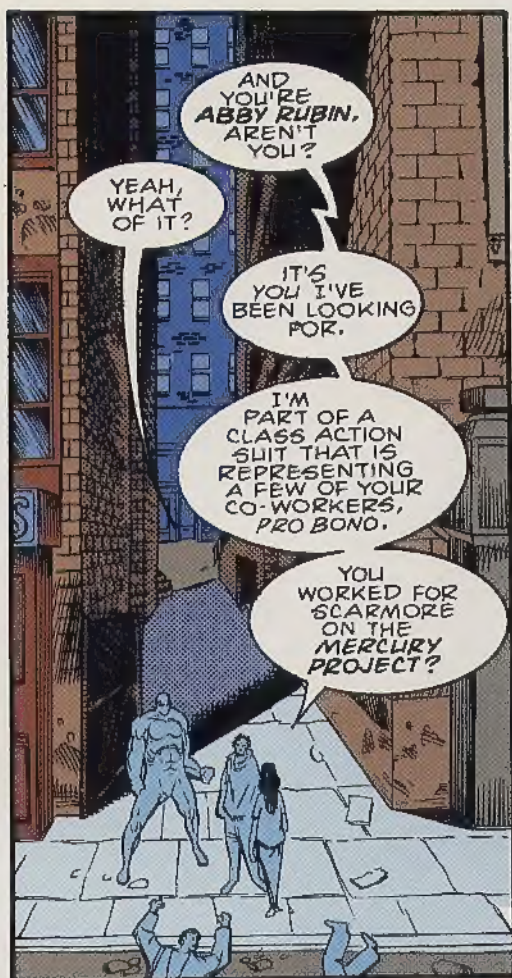
EASY  
TO TELL  
WHO THE  
BAD ONES  
ARE!

AA  
AAAAA









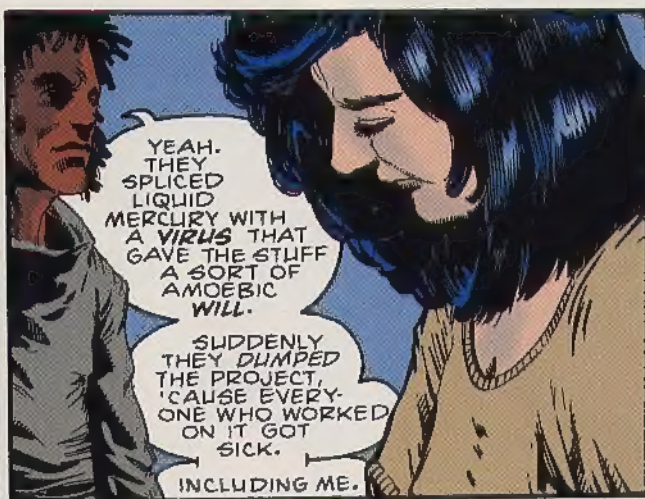
AND YOU'RE **ABBY RUBIN**.  
AREN'T YOU?

YEAH,  
WHAT OF IT?

IT'S  
YOU I'VE  
BEEN LOOKING  
FOR.

I'M  
PART OF A  
CLASS ACTION  
SUIT THAT IS  
REPRESENTING  
A FEW OF YOUR  
CO-WORKERS,  
PRO BONO.

YOU  
WORKED FOR  
SCARMORE  
ON THE  
**MERCURY**  
PROJECT?



YEAH.  
THEY  
SPICED  
LIQUID  
**MERCURY** WITH  
A **VIRUS** THAT  
GAVE THE STUFF  
A SORT OF  
AMOEBIC  
WILL.

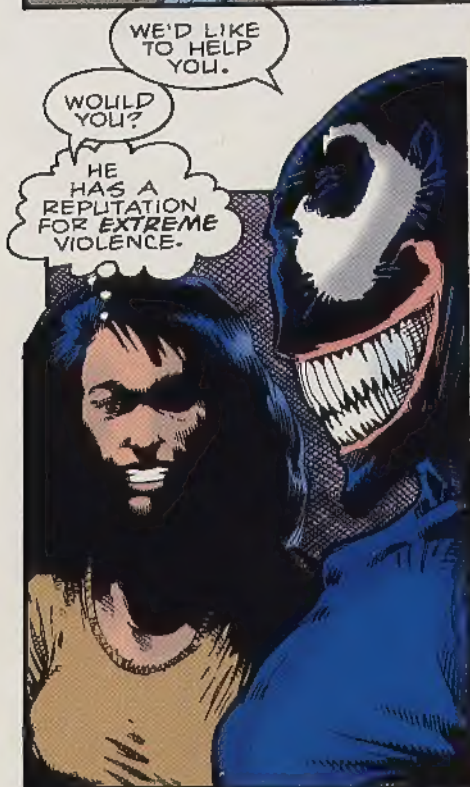
SUDDENLY  
THEY **DUMPED**  
THE PROJECT,  
'CAUSE EVERY-  
ONE WHO WORKED  
ON IT GOT  
SICK.

INCLUDING ME.



YES. A  
POISONING  
THAT HAS  
ALREADY  
DRIVEN  
SEVERAL  
OF YOUR  
CO-WOR-  
KERS  
MAD.

MAD  
IS THE  
LEAST  
OF IT.



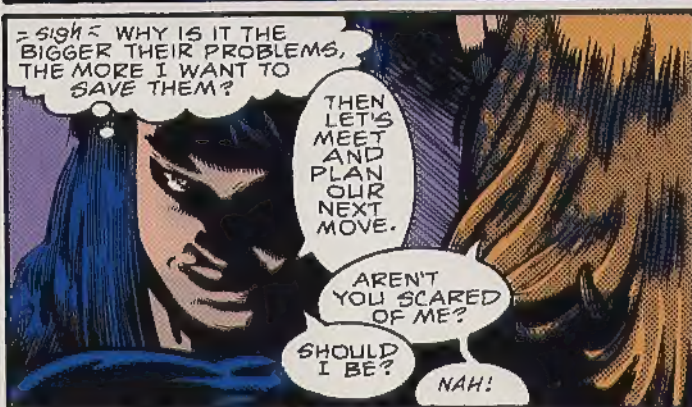
WE'D LIKE  
TO HELP  
YOU.

WOULD  
YOU?

HE  
HAS A  
REPUTATION  
FOR **EXTREME**  
VIOLENCE.



BUT  
HE SEEMS  
SO...  
**EARNEST.**



= SIGH = WHY IS IT THE  
BIGGER THEIR PROBLEMS,  
THE MORE I WANT TO  
SAVE THEM?

THEN  
LET'S  
MEET  
AND  
PLAN  
OUR  
NEXT  
MOVE.

AREN'T  
YOU SCARED  
OF ME?

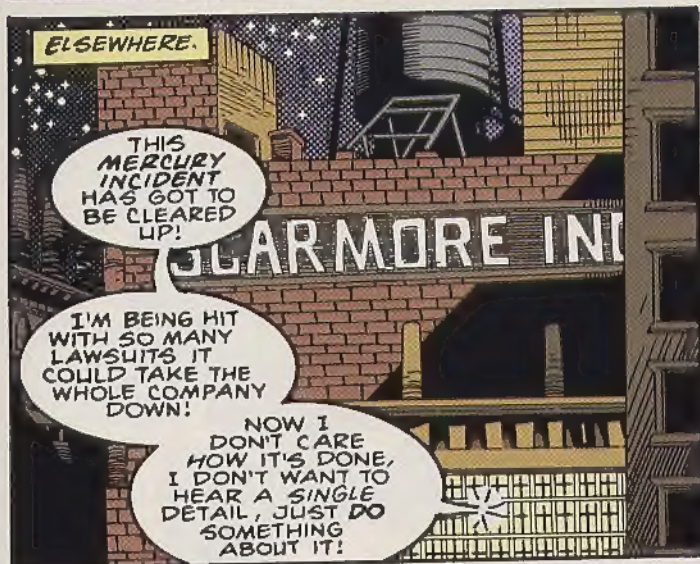
SHOULD  
I BE?

NAH!





BUT IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME I'VE GOT SOME HIRED THUGS TO TORTURE TILL THEY SQUEAL ON THEIR BOSS.

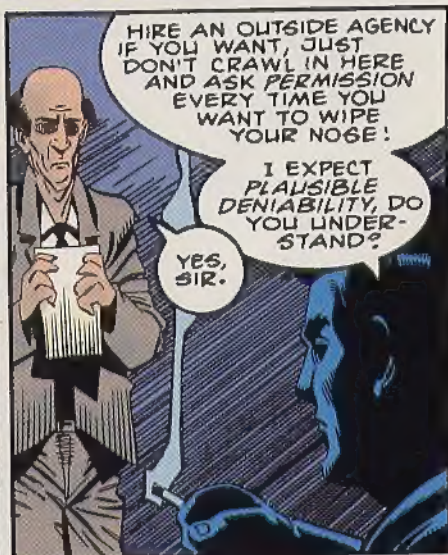


ELSEWHERE.

THIS MERCURY INCIDENT HAS GOT TO BE CLEARED UP!

I'M BEING HIT WITH SO MANY LAWSUITS IT COULD TAKE THE WHOLE COMPANY DOWN!

NOW I DON'T CARE HOW IT'S DONE, I DON'T WANT TO HEAR A SINGLE DETAIL, JUST DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!



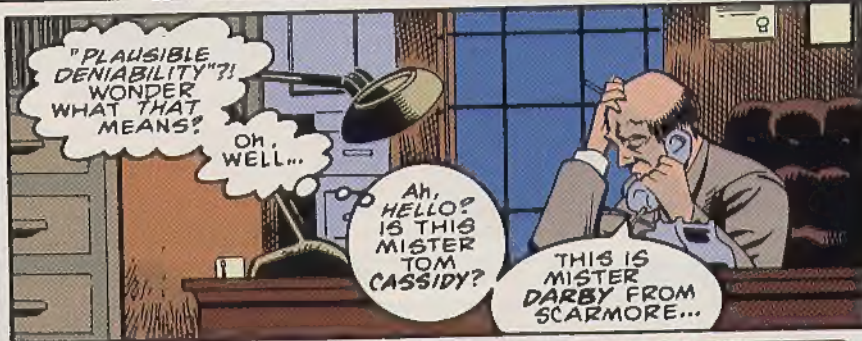
HIRE AN OUTSIDE AGENCY IF YOU WANT, JUST DON'T CRAWL IN HERE AND ASK PERMISSION EVERY TIME YOU WANT TO WIPE YOUR NOSE!

I EXPECT PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY, DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

YES, SIR.



I GUESS THAT WAS A "YES" TO HIRING HELP.



"PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY"?! WONDER WHAT THAT MEANS?

Oh, WELL...

AH, HELLO? IS THIS MISTER TOM CASSIDY?

THIS IS MISTER DARBY FROM SCARMORE...



THAT'S IT, MY FRIEND.

WE JUST GOT A BIG CASH JOB-- AND EASY WORK, TOO.

THAT KID-NAPPING?

LET'S GO.



UNDERGROUND  
SAN FRANCISCO.

DO YOU  
SEE HOW  
SPECIAL IT  
IS DOWN  
HERE?

IT'S  
BEAUTI-  
FUL.

WE  
PROVIDE A  
SAFE HAVEN  
FOR THOSE  
THAT LIVE  
OUTSIDE THE  
LAW AND  
SOCIETY--

--AND I  
DON'T MEAN  
CRIMINALS,  
I MEAN THOSE  
THAT JUST  
LOST FAITH IN  
THE WORLD  
ABOVE.

JUST AS, THE  
WORLD OVER, NATIONS  
ARE DECLARING INDE-  
PENDENCE, SOVEREIGNTY  
MOVEMENTS ARE DEMANDING  
RIGHTS EVERYWHERE -- WE,  
TOO, ARE TAKING A STAND...

"BUT,  
FOR NOW,  
IN  
SECRET.

SO I  
HAVE MADE  
MYSELF  
THEIR  
PROTECTOR.

YOU'RE  
VERY  
ARTICULATE,  
EDDIE.  
DID YOU  
USED  
TO..."

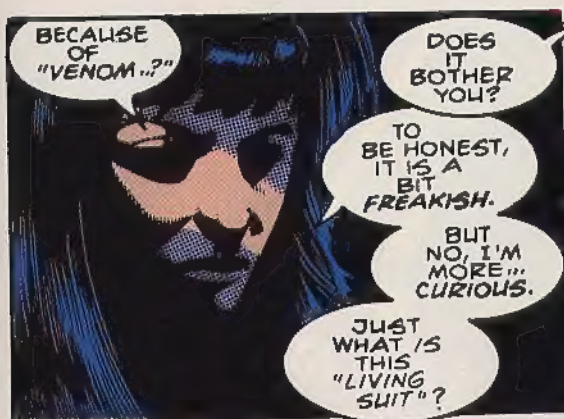
HAVE A  
NORMAL  
LIFE, YOU  
MEAN?

YES. I  
WENT THROUGH  
YEARS OF  
HIGHER EDUCATION.  
I WAS A  
"PROMINENT  
JOURNALIST."

BUT  
NEVER  
MIND  
THAT.

THAT  
GUY'S  
DEAD.





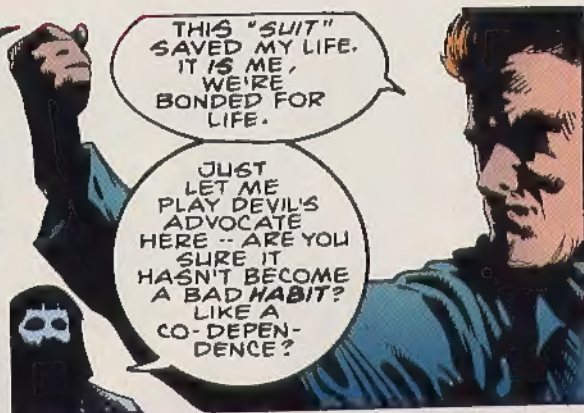
BECAUSE  
OF  
"VENOM"?"

DOES  
IT  
BOTHER  
YOU?

TO  
BE HONEST,  
IT IS A  
BIT  
FREAKISH.

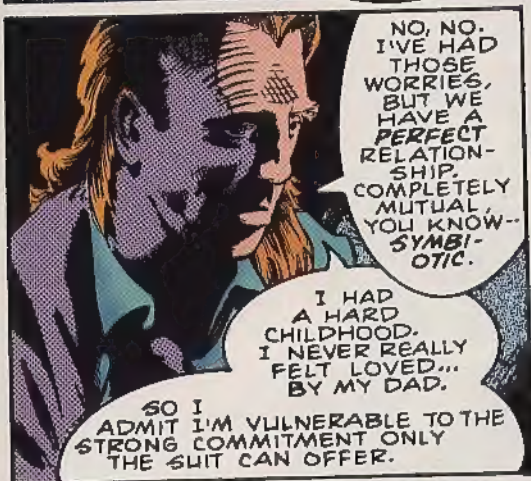
BUT  
NO, I'M  
MORE...  
CURIOUS.

JUST  
WHAT IS  
THIS  
"LIVING  
SUIT"?



THIS "SUIT"  
SAVED MY LIFE.  
IT IS ME,  
WE'RE  
BONDED FOR  
LIFE.

JUST  
LET ME  
PLAY DEVIL'S  
ADVOCATE  
HERE -- ARE YOU  
SURE IT  
HASN'T BECOME  
A BAD HABIT?  
LIKE A  
CO-DEPEN-  
DENCE?



NO, NO.  
I'VE HAD  
THOSE  
WORRIES,  
BUT WE  
HAVE A  
PERFECT  
RELATION-  
SHIP.  
COMPLETELY  
MUTUAL.  
YOU KNOW--  
SYMBI-  
OTIC.

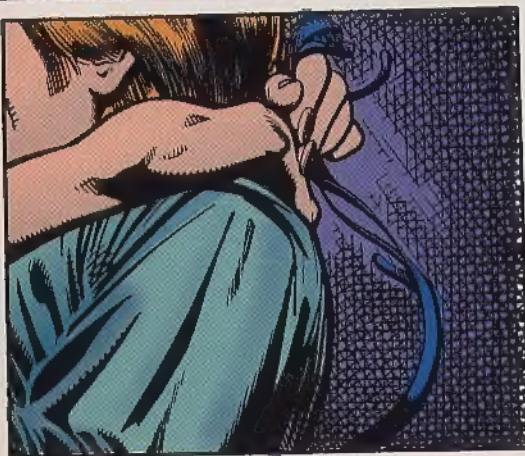
I HAD  
A HARD  
CHILDHOOD.  
I NEVER REALLY  
FELT LOVED...  
BY MY DAD.

SO I  
ADMIT I'M VULNERABLE TO THE  
STRONG COMMITMENT ONLY  
THE SUIT CAN OFFER.



WAS  
THERE  
NEVER A  
WOMAN  
WHO  
OFFERED  
YOU THAT?

THERE  
WAS... BUT  
SHE'S  
GONE...



Ohmi-  
GOD!

I  
THOUGHT  
THAT WAS  
YOUR HAND  
BUT IT WAS  
THE  
SUIT!

IT  
SQUEEZED  
ME!





I'M SO  
SORRY,  
BECK!

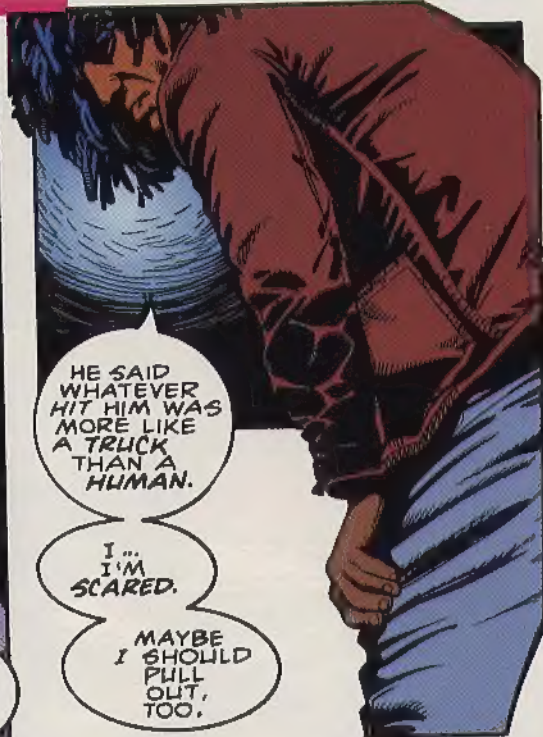
WE  
GET  
EXCITED...  
TOGETHER!

BECK!  
EDDIE!

HANK--  
THE ONE  
IN YOUR  
LAW-  
SUIT  
AGAINST  
SCAR--  
MORE--

HE  
JUST  
PULLED  
OUT!

HE'S  
DROPPING ALL  
CHARGES... AND  
HE WAS CALLING  
FROM A  
HOSPITAL.



HE SAID  
WHATEVER  
HIT HIM WAS  
MORE LIKE  
A TRUCK  
THAN A  
HUMAN.

I...  
I'M  
SCARED.

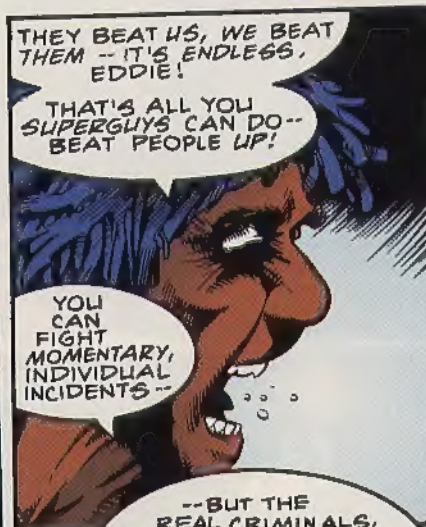
MAYBE  
I SHOULD  
PULL  
OUT,  
TOO.



NO!

WE  
HAVE TO  
STAND  
TOGETHER!

THEY  
WANNA  
PLAY  
ROUGH?  
WE'LL  
BEAT  
THEM  
WORSE!

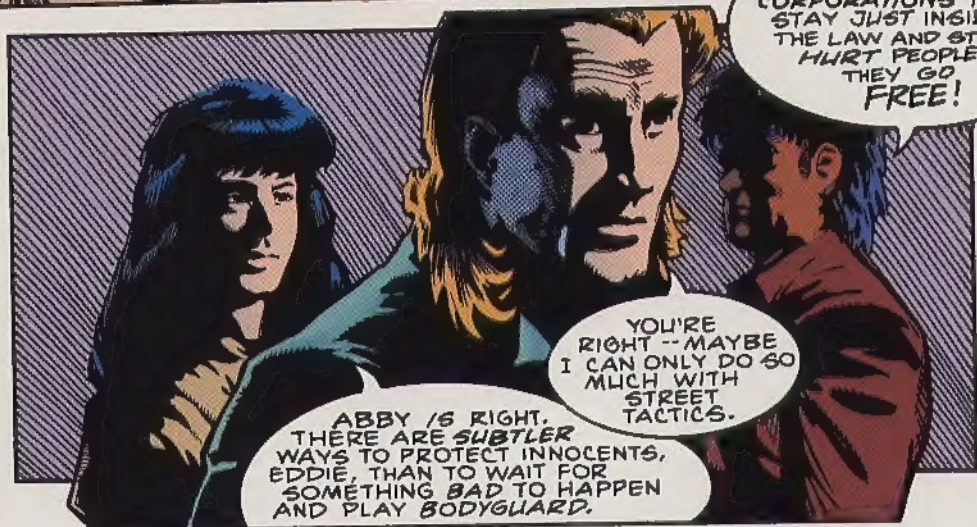


THEY BEAT US, WE BEAT  
THEM -- IT'S ENDLESS,  
EDDIE!

THAT'S ALL YOU  
SUPERGUYS CAN DO--  
BEAT PEOPLE UP!

YOU  
CAN  
FIGHT  
MOMENTARY,  
INDIVIDUAL  
INCIDENTS --

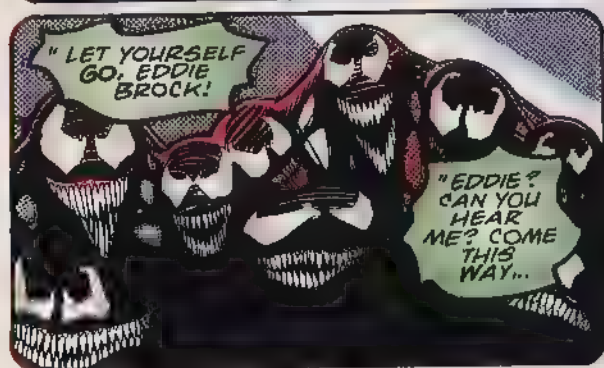
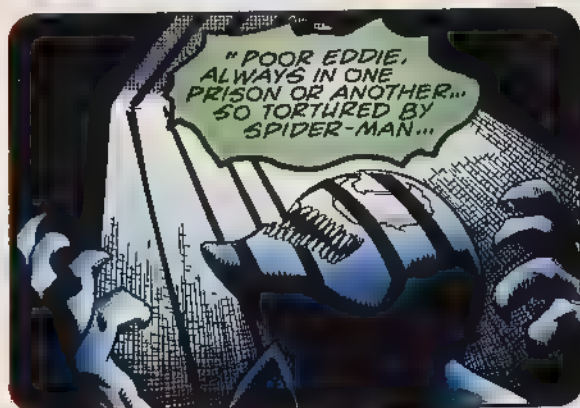
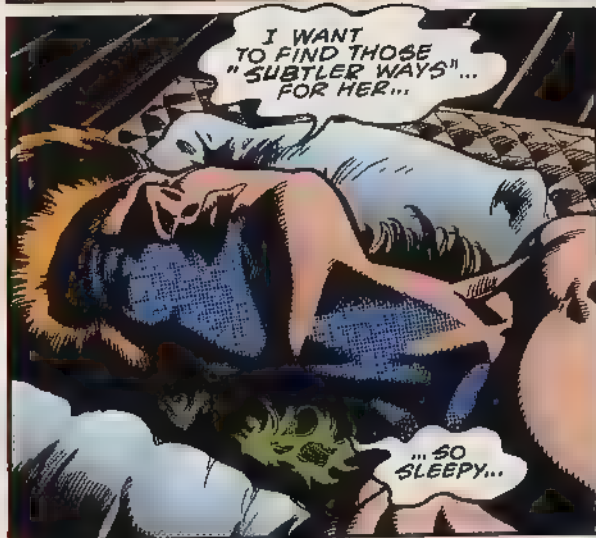
--BUT THE  
REAL CRIMINALS,  
CORPORATIONS THAT  
STAY JUST INSIDE  
THE LAW AND STILL  
HURT PEOPLE--  
THEY GO  
FREE!



YOU'RE  
RIGHT -- MAYBE  
I CAN ONLY DO SO  
MUCH WITH  
STREET  
TACTICS.

ABBY IS RIGHT.  
THERE ARE SUBTLER  
WAYS TO PROTECT INNOCENTS,  
EDDIE, THAN TO WAIT FOR  
SOMETHING BAD TO HAPPEN  
AND PLAY BODYGUARD.







ELSEWHERE IN  
SAN FRAN...

GLUG  
GLUG  
GLUG

GUESS  
IT'LL JUST  
MIX IN HERE  
AND BE  
HARMLESS...

MUTATING  
MERCURY.

I GUESS  
THIS IS  
ROTTEN OF ME,  
BUT A GUY'S  
GOTTA  
LIVE!

AT A  
HUNDRED A  
BARREL, THE  
GOING RATE  
FOR DUMPING  
TOXIC STUFF--

RADIOACTIVE  
RUN-OFF.

BIO-ENGINEERING  
WASTE.

-- I CAN MAKE  
A THOUSAND A NIGHT!  
WHO COULD REFUSE?

I DUNNO,  
JOE. IT'S THE  
WASTE  
DISPOSAL  
COSTS THAT ARE  
KILLING  
US.

BUT  
WE HAVE NO  
CHOICE. YOU CAN'T  
MAKE NAIL POLISH  
WITHOUT SOME TOXIC  
BY-PRODUCTS. AND  
THE CONTAINMENT  
DISPOSAL PROCESS  
IS EXPENSIVE.

BUT THOSE  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
LAWS ARE  
PARANOID. IT'S  
OVERKILL. ALL  
THOSE BLASTED  
SAFETY  
PROCEDURES.

GUESS  
YOU'RE  
RIGHT,  
JOE.

LOOK,  
IT'S EITHER  
CUT THE WASTE  
COSTS OR CUT  
OUR SALARIES.  
YOU GET IT?

=sigh=

HEY, FRANK, EVERY-  
TIME WE DO THIS  
YOU GET  
DRUNK.

YEAH,  
WELL...

.. EVERY  
TIME WE  
DUMP  
THIS  
STUFF  
I HATE  
MYSELF.

AH,  
LIGHTEN  
UP. THE  
WHOLE WORLD'S  
POLLUTED,  
A FEW MORE  
BARRELS WON'T  
HURT.

CRACKED X-RAY  
MACHINES.

BUSTED FREON  
TUBES...

NO LITTERING

6 MONTHS  
IN JAIL AND/OR  
A \$500 FINE

TAKES  
ME SO LONG  
TO DRIVE THIS  
FAR...

BUT  
I AIN'T  
GONNA DUMP  
THIS WHERE  
MY KIDS  
SWIM...

PESTICIDE  
RUN-OFF.

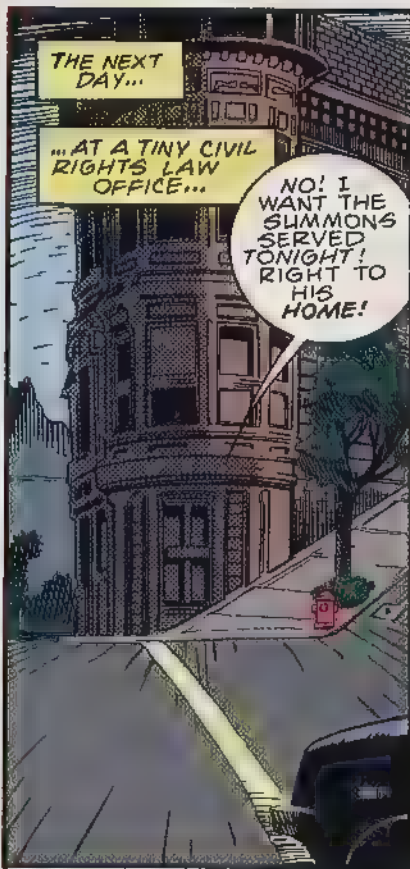
TOXIC WOOD  
SHAVINGS.

PHARMACEUTICAL  
EXCESS.

PLASTIC  
RESIDUES.

FACTORY  
FARM  
STERIODS...





THE NEXT DAY...

...AT A TINY CIVIL RIGHTS LAW OFFICE...

NO! I WANT THE SUMMONS SERVED TONIGHT! RIGHT TO HIS HOME!



YOU TELL 'IM, O BECK!

I KNOW IT'LL BE DINNER TIME -- THAT'S PERFECT. I WANT HIM TO BE EMBARRASSED!



AND I WANT WITNESSES...

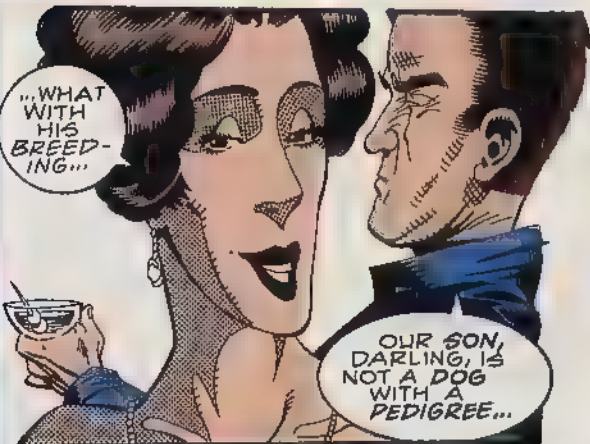
HEY, BECK-- IT'S TIME FOR THE PRESS CONFERENCE...



TUXEDO PARK...

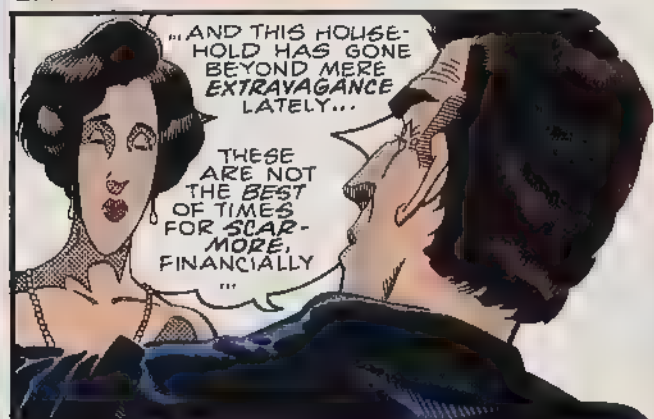
COST IS NO MATTER, DARLING...

WE MUST FIND A WAY TO GET CHAS INTO THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS OF SCHOOLS, IT JUST WOULDN'T DO OTHERWISE...



...WHAT WITH HIS BREEDING...

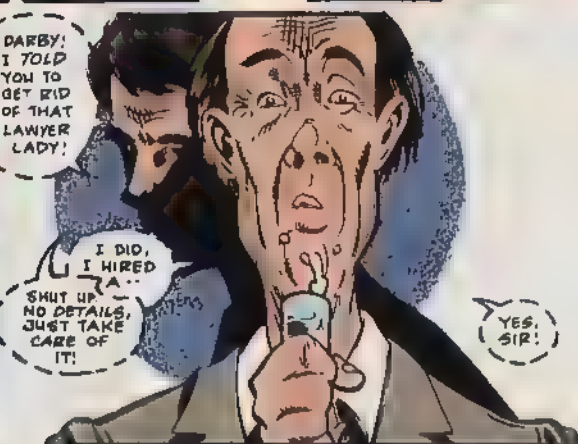
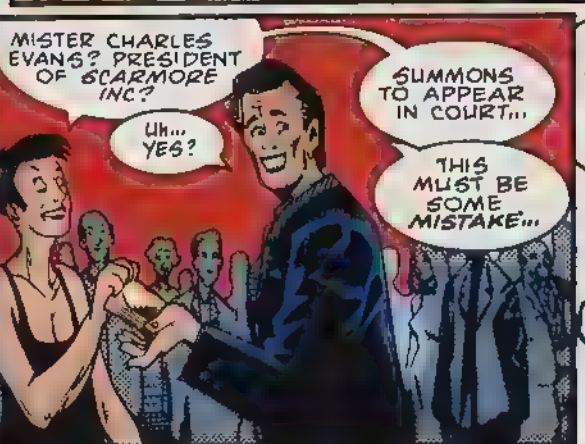
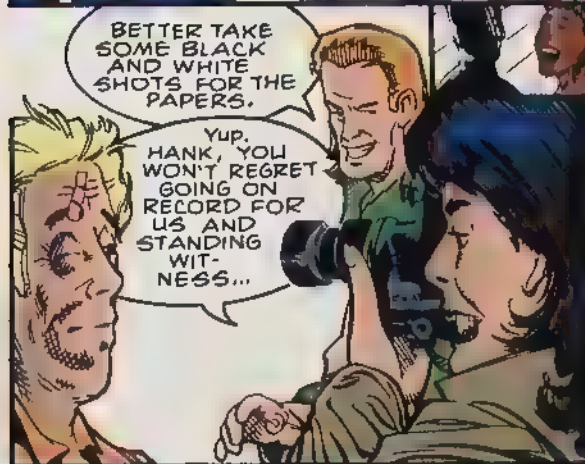
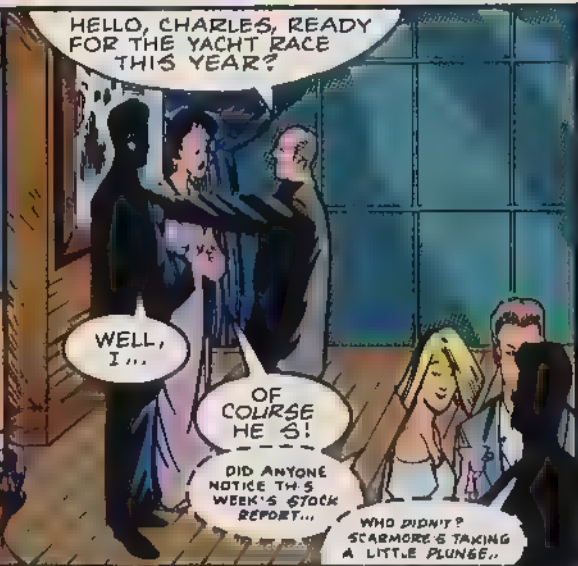
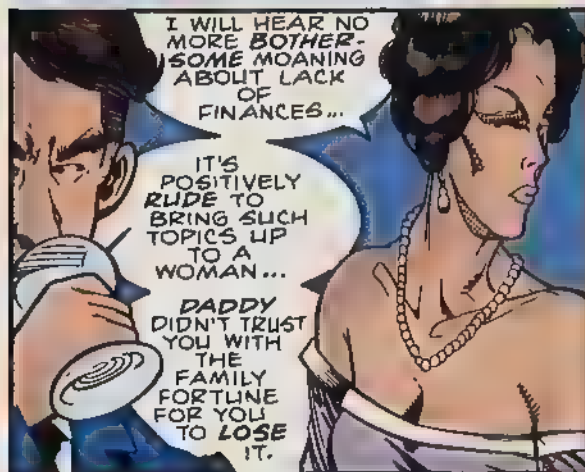
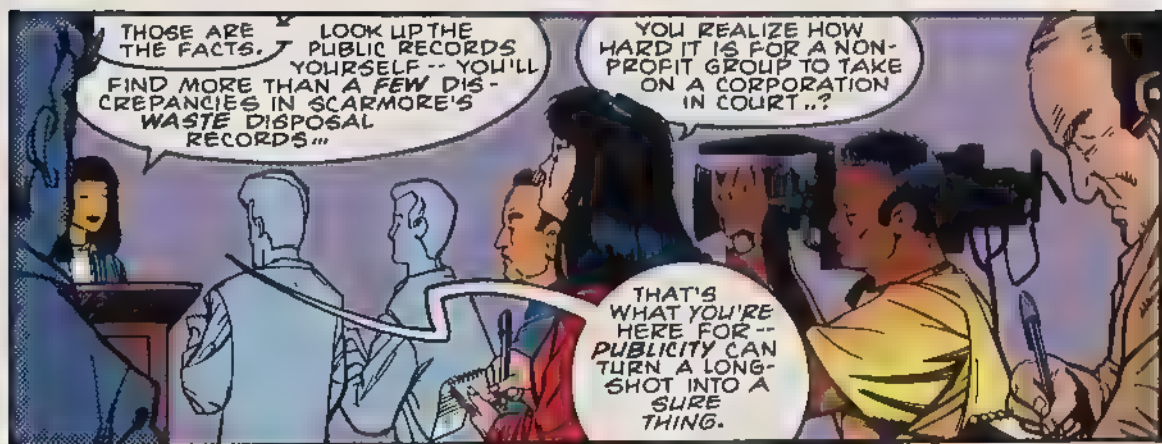
OUR SON, DARLING, IS NOT A DOG WITH A PEDIGREE...



...AND THIS HOUSEHOLD HAS GONE BEYOND MERE EXTRAVAGANCE LATELY...

THESE ARE NOT THE BEST OF TIMES FOR SCAR-MORE, FINANCIALLY...





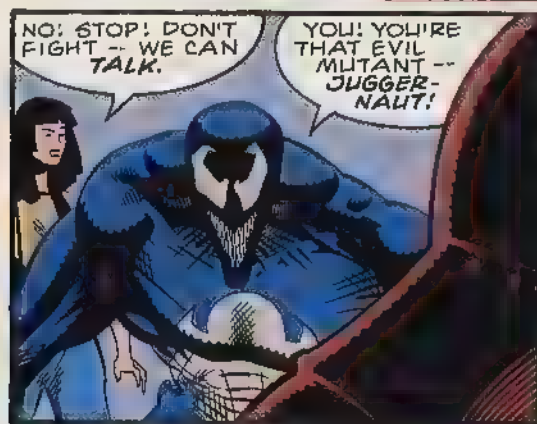








SO?  
NONE OF  
US ARE  
NORMAL,  
CHUMP.



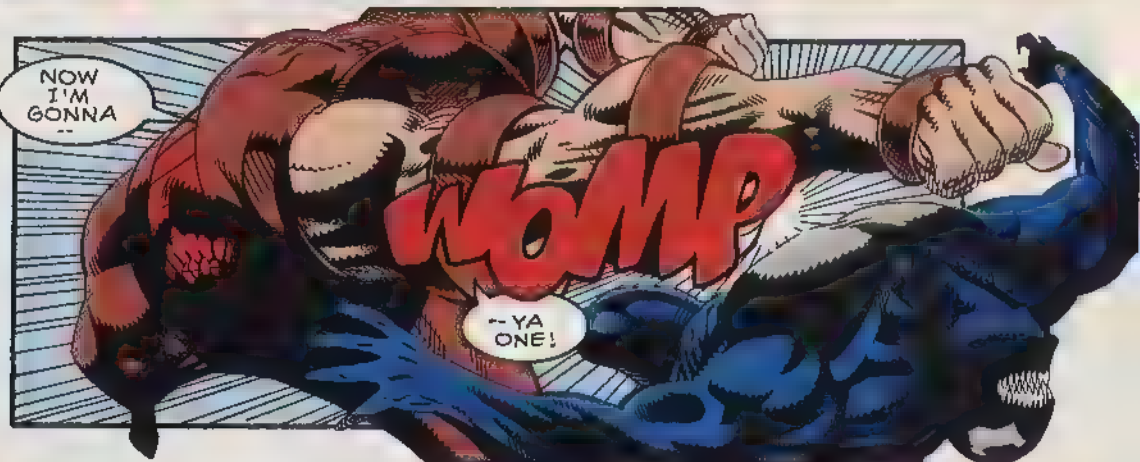
NO! STOP! DON'T  
FIGHT -- WE CAN  
TALK.

YOU! YOU'RE  
THAT EVIL  
MUTANT --  
JUGGER-  
NAUT!



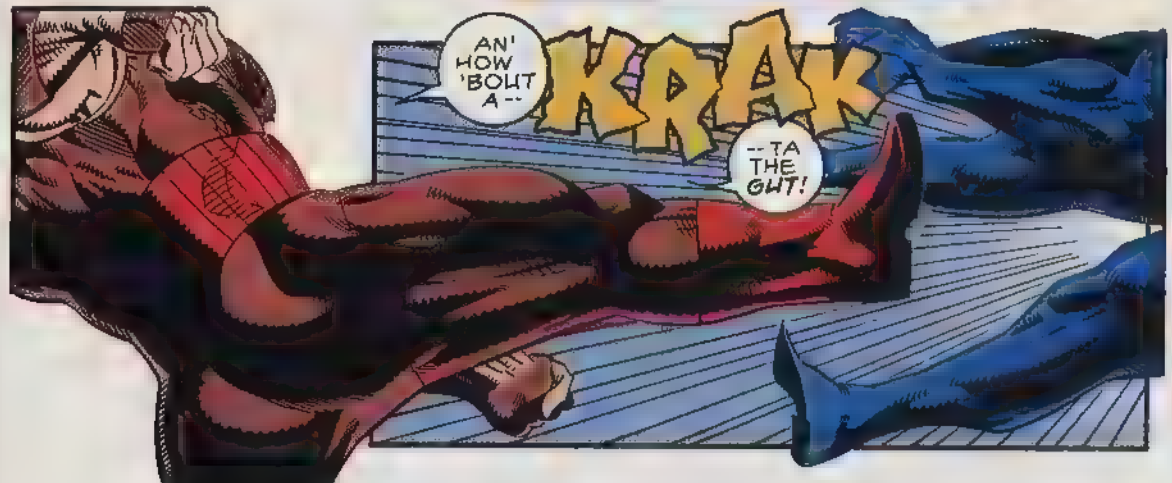
LOOKS TO ME  
LIKE YOU AIN'T  
EXACTLY MISTER-  
STRAIGHT-AND-  
NARROW  
YOURSELF.

BUT  
I GOT  
A JOB  
TO DO.



NOW  
I'M  
GONNA  
--

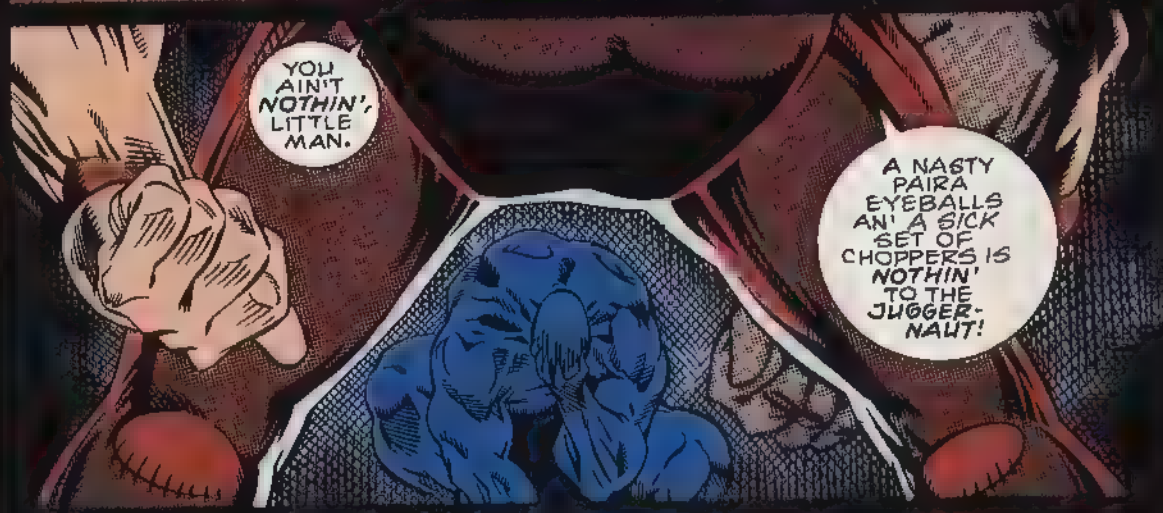
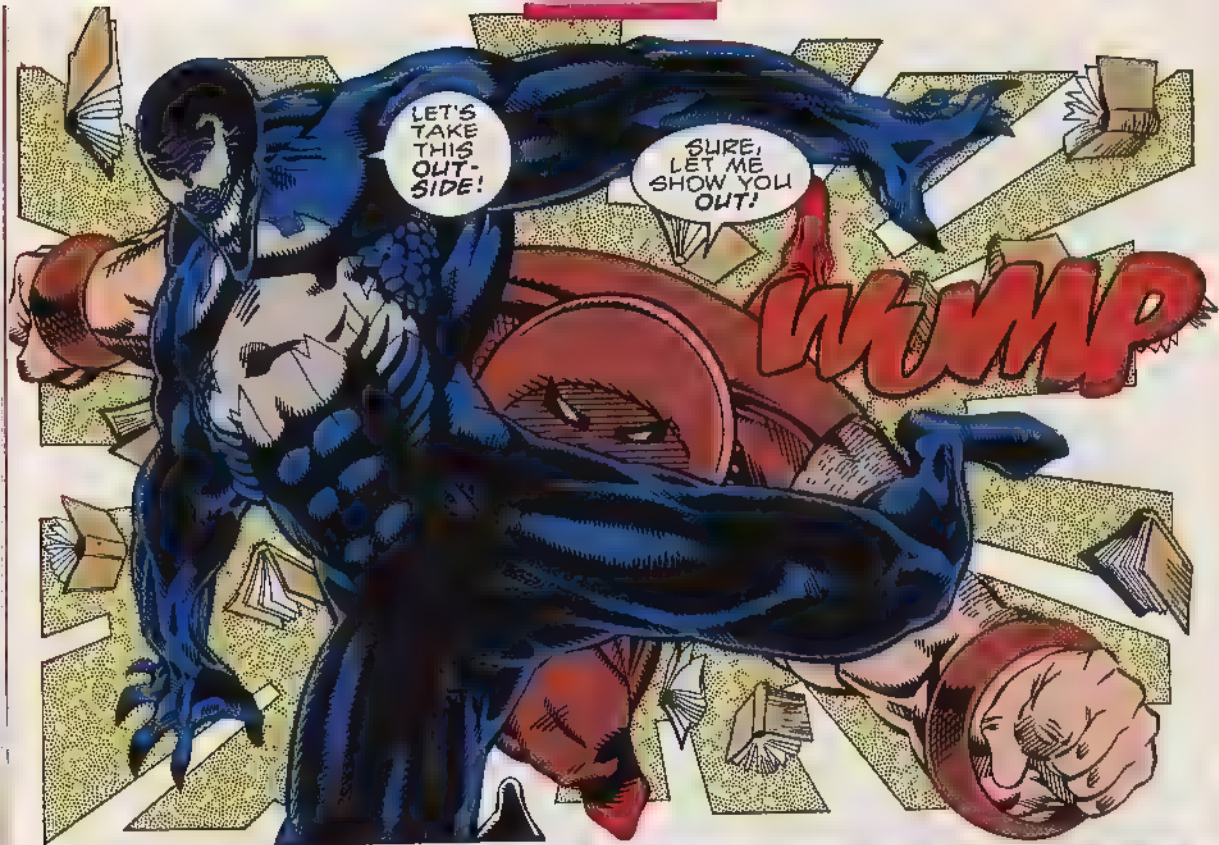
-- YA  
ONE!



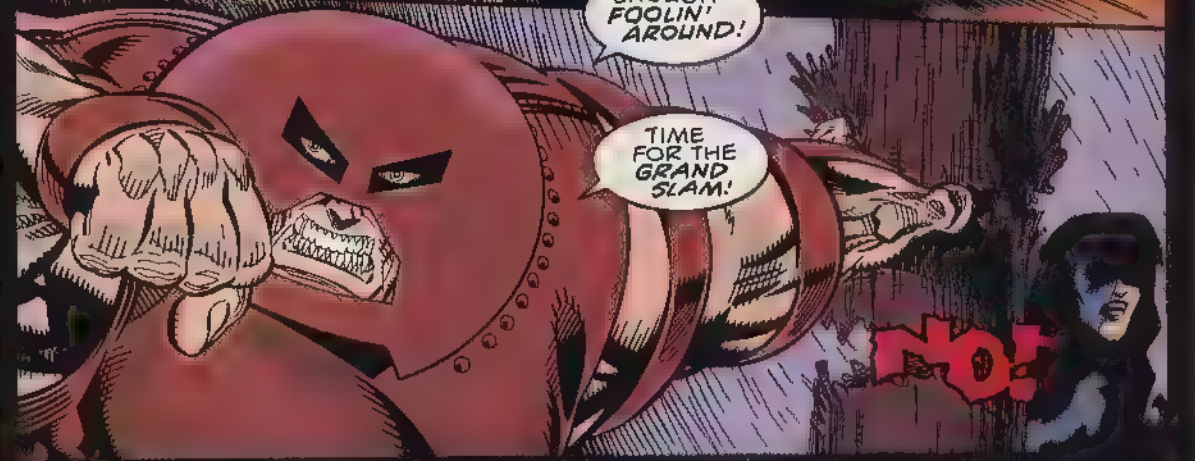
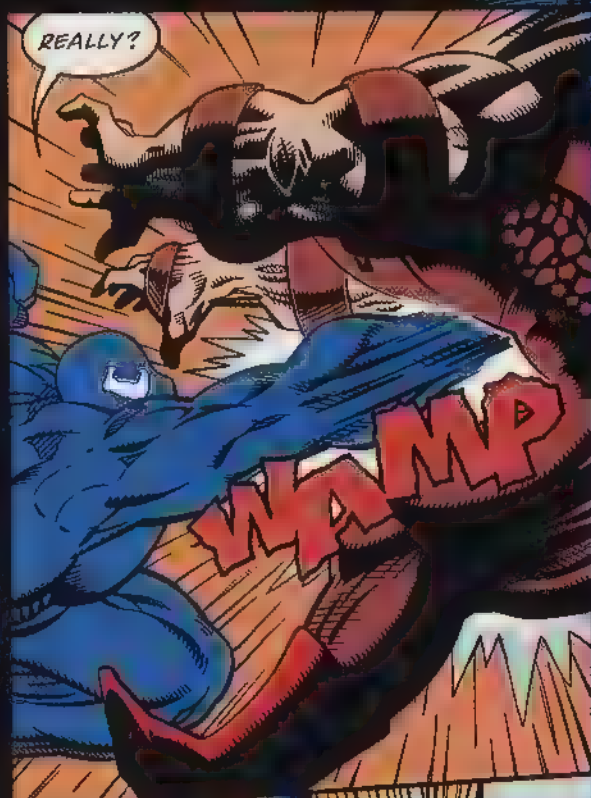
AN'  
HOW  
'BOUT  
A--

-- TA  
THE  
GUT!

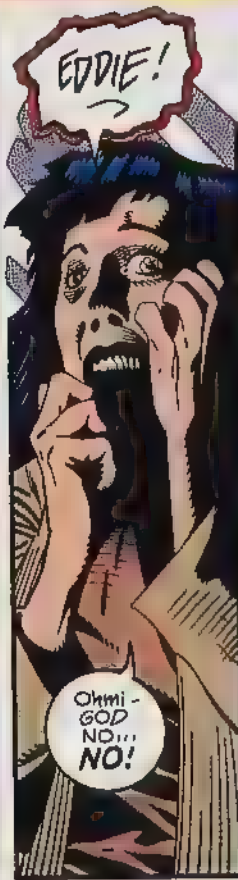
















OMIGOD. THEY'VE  
CRASHED INTO AN  
UNDERGROUND  
TUNNEL...

WHO  
WAS THAT  
MONSTER?  
WHAT DID  
HE WANT  
WITH ME?

POOR  
EDDIE,  
TRYING  
SO HARD  
TO SAVE  
ME!

HE'S  
GOT TO WIN  
THIS ONE --  
SUDDENLY I'M  
GLAD HE'S SO  
TOUGH  
AND SCARY!

GIVE UP,  
VENOM!

DON'T  
YOU KNOW  
WHAT A  
JUGGER-  
NAUT  
IS?

AN UN-  
STOPPABLE  
FORCE THAT  
CRUSHES  
EVERYTHING  
IN ITS  
PATH!

GEE,  
YOU CAN  
READ A  
DICTIONARY.

SOMETHING'S  
HERE!

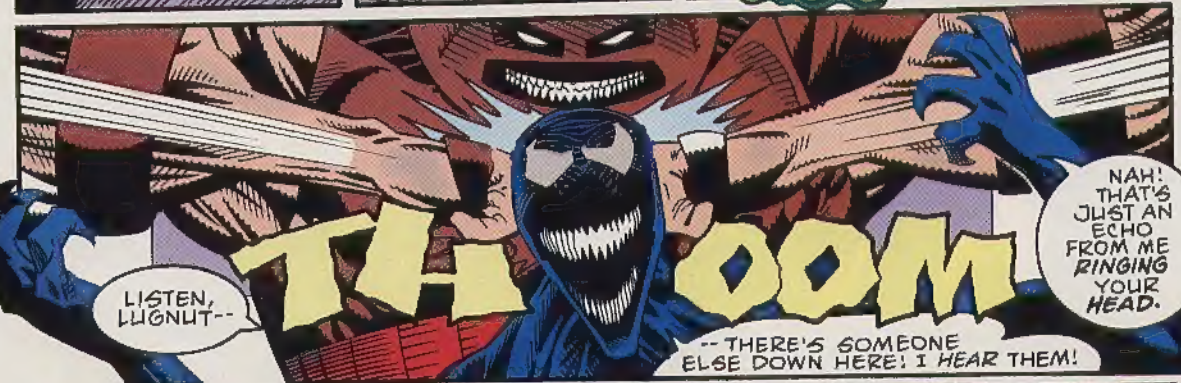
A SYMPATHETIC  
PRESENCE!

CALL OUT  
TO IT!

HELLO!

WHO  
ARE  
YOU?

ARE YOU  
LIKE  
US?



LISTEN,  
LUGNUT--

NAH!  
THAT'S  
JUST AN  
ECHO  
FROM ME  
RINGING  
YOUR  
HEAD.

-- THERE'S SOMEONE  
ELSE DOWN HERE! I HEAR THEM!

WE MUST  
SURVIVE!

WE MUST MATE  
WITH SOMETHING THAT HELPS  
US LEAVE THIS POOL!

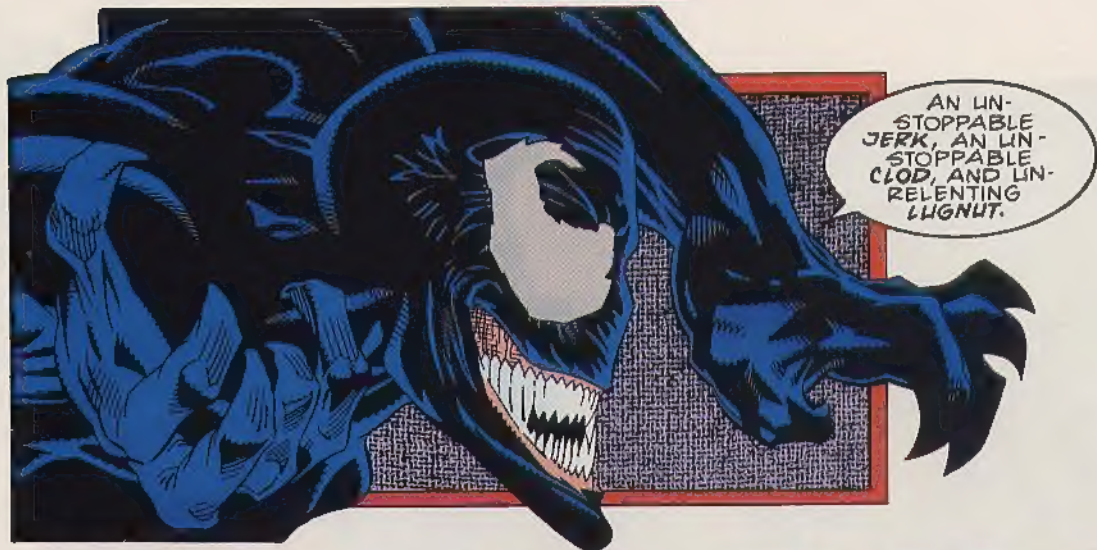
WE  
HAVE  
WILL!

WE MUST  
BOND!



UN-  
STOPP-  
ABLE,  
EH?





AN UN-  
STOPPABLE  
JERK, AN UN-  
STOPPABLE  
CLOD, AND UN-  
RELENTING  
LUGNUT.



AH,  
SHADDUR.

KRRK

COME  
TO US!



WE WANT TO  
BOND WITH YOU!

HUH?  
WHO  
ARE  
YOU?

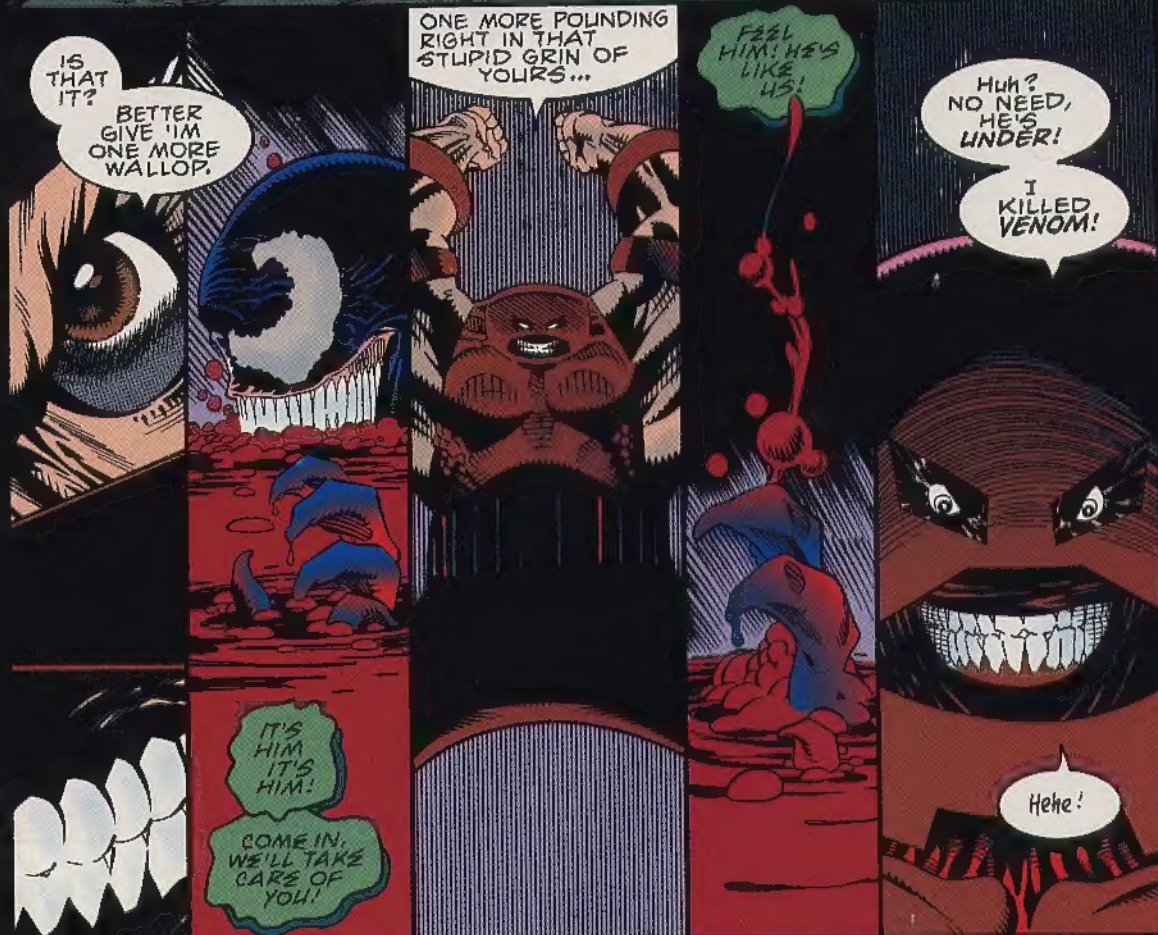
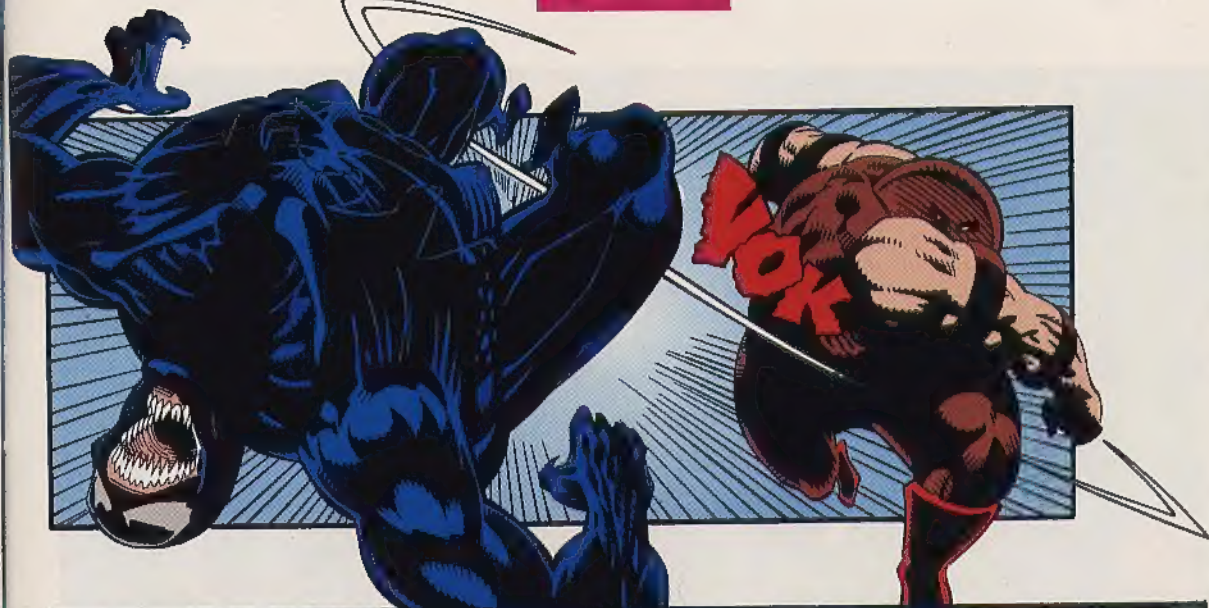
STILL  
HEARING  
VOICES  
IN THE OLD  
VENOM-  
HEAD?



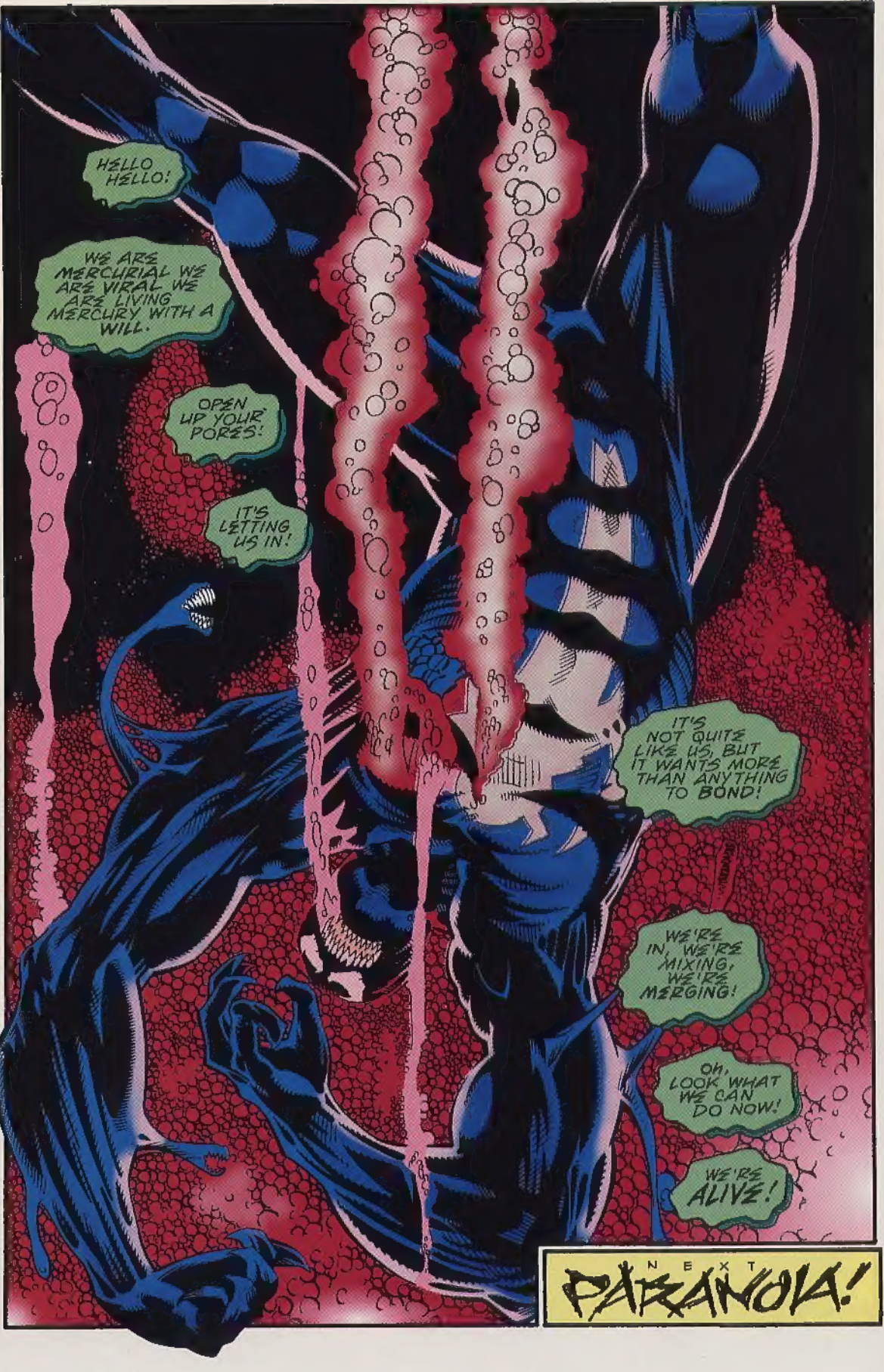
WELL,  
YOU KEEP  
TALKING TO  
YOURSELF,  
DON'T  
MIND  
ME--

SKK









HELLO  
HELLO!

WE ARE  
MERCLIRIAL WE  
ARE VIRAL WE  
ARE LIVING  
MERCURY WITH A  
WILL.

OPEN  
UP YOUR  
PORES!

IT'S  
LETTING  
US IN!

IT'S  
NOT QUITE  
LIKE US, BUT  
IT WANTS MORE  
THAN ANYTHING  
TO BOND!

WE'RE  
IN, WE'RE  
MIXING,  
WE'RE  
MERGING!

OH,  
LOOK WHAT  
WE CAN  
DO NOW!

WE'RE  
ALIVE!

N E X T  
**PARANOIA!**